

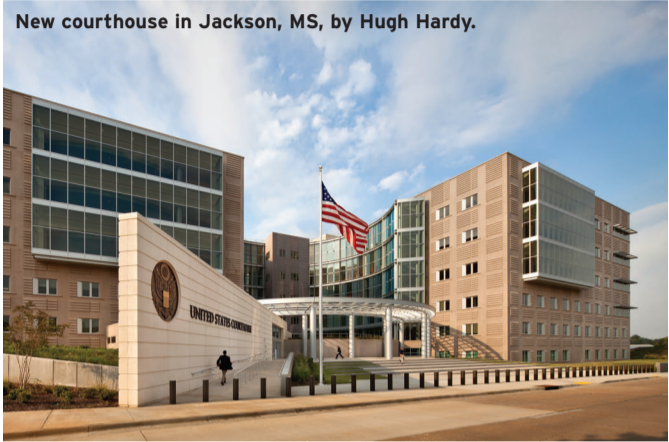
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ARCHITECTS HOLDING THEIR BREATH AS THE COUNTRY'S LANDLORD IS ENGULFED BY SCANDAL

GSA Shock Absorbers

"My eyebrows went up and they haven't gone down," architect Laurie Hawkinson said of the recent scandal at the General Services Administration (GSA). The reaction of the Smith-Miller + Architects partner was typical within the architectural community after a report from the Inspector General's office revealed that the agency's Western Regions Conference held at a Las Vegas spa back in October 2010 had spent more than \$6,000 on commemorative coins for attendees and on clown acts, among other indulgences,

on the taxpayer's dole. Architects' concerns were coupled with alarm that some of the agency's hallmark initiatives, such as the Design Excellence Program, would suffer in the political fallout.

Rob Rogers of Rogers Marvel Architects, who has worked on GSA projects both in New York and Washington, D.C., fears that now any design element could be interpreted as an extravagance and even high-profile projects will be forced to have heavy rounds of value engineering. **continued on page 7**



OLIN and Weiss/Manfredi's design for the Sylvan Theater site.

COURTESY TRUST FOR THE NATIONAL MALL

WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR REVAMPING THREE SITES ON THE NATIONAL MALL

DOWNTRODDEN NO MORE

As the nonprofit Trust for the National Mall puts it, America's most popular national park has been loved to death. With over 25 million visitors annually, the Mall is looking more than downtrodden, but a competition that wrapped up on May 3 aims to refresh three key sections of the Mall—Union Square at the foot

of the Capitol, Constitution Gardens near the Lincoln Memorial, and the Sylvan Theater at the Washington Monument. The National Mall Plan, completed in 2010, outlines them as part of the restoration strategies for the 700-acre public space.

The 36-week-long National Mall Design Competition sponsored by the trust drew entries from emerging and established firms alike, but in the end Gustafson Guthrie Nichol and Davis Brody Bond were selected to redesign Union Square; Rogers Marvel Architects and Peter Walker & Partners for Constitution Gardens; and OLIN and Weiss/Manfredi for the Sylvan **continued on page 4**

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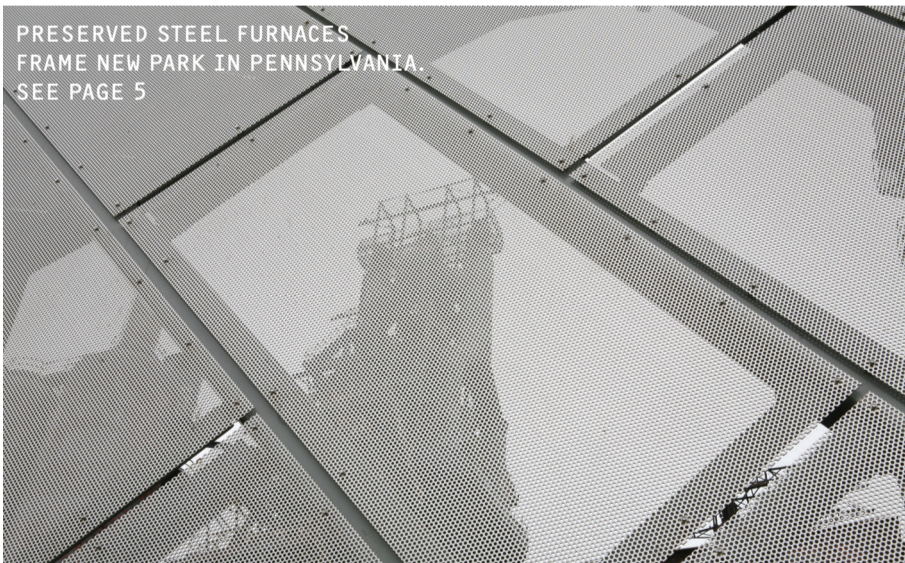
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CITY COUNCIL SEEKS TO REVAMP BUSINESS AS USUAL AT LANDMARKS

Battle Landmarkia

A sudden flurry of bills introduced on May 2 at a City Council hearing sought to revamp the way business gets done at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. While the 11 bills deal primarily with procedural issues, a sentence in one zeroes in on the essence of the preservation-versus-development **continued on page 3**

PRESERVED STEEL FURNACES FRAME NEW PARK IN PENNSYLVANIA. SEE PAGE 5



STOELKER/AN



COURTESY MIT MEDIA LAB

MIT GROUP'S 100-INCH CAR ROLLING OUT TO SELECT CITIES

HIRIKO, MON AMOUR!

Bloated mid-century cars were once named to suggest distant travel: Wayfarer, Safari, Jetstar. Now comes the tiny Hiriko. The name means "urban" in the Basque region of Spain, where its production begins next year. At 100 inches long when in driving mode, the **continued on page 6**



COURTESY HERZOG & DE MEURON/AI WEIWEI

NEW SERPENTINE PAVILION BUILDS ON PAST STRUCTURES

BURIED INSPIRATION

The 12th Serpentine Gallery Pavilion in London is nothing without the first 11. The collaborators responsible for the wonderfully intricate Beijing National Stadium (aka the Bird's Nest) in 2008—Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron and Chinese artist Ai Weiwei—have designed a temporary pavilion inspired by the archaeology of previous structures by Peter Zumthor, Jean Nouvel, and Zaha Hadid, among others. **continued on page 3**

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TOUGH LOVE

In this country, the rough, raw concrete 'beton brut' architecture known as Brutalism has never been popular with the public. So, we should not be surprised that buildings falling even loosely into this stylistic convention are now regularly threatened with demolition by civic and business leaders. We have, for example, reported in the last few weeks about the eminent demolition of John Johansen's 1967 Mechanic Theater in Baltimore, which has been denied landmark status since 2007, and his iconic Mummers Theater in Oklahoma City. North of New York City, Paul Rudolph's Orange County Government Center in Goshen, New York seems to be holding on by the thinnest thread while government officials let the building deteriorate in hopes of replacing it with a banal and generic colonial box. These buildings each have their own unique and distinguishing architectural and urban qualities that make them significant in their own right but, like the welfare state that existed when they were built, seem to be remnants of a time when American government put more thought into supporting public service and culture.

We don't wish to carry on a crusade for Brutalism to a skeptical public but it is worth making the point that these buildings represent an important and influential cultural movement that cannot be forgotten by destroying its built projects. In fact, in time these Brutalist structures may not look so bad when compared with the commercial towers (slated for the Mechanics Theater site) and thoughtless bland boxes (on the Rudolph site) that will replace them.

In England where the movement began, the public has finally come around to an appreciation for what they once called "concrete lumps" and famously "carbuncles." The British architects Alison and Peter Smithson coined the term Brutalism around 1953 to describe the poured board-marked concrete with which they constructed many of their post-World War II buildings, such as the Hunstanton School. The expression gained wide currency when the British architectural critic Reyner Banham used it in the title of his 1966 book, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?*, to characterize a recently established cluster of architectural approaches, particularly in Europe. The early Brutalist complex of cultural venues on London's South Bank: The Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Hayward Gallery follows this by-now familiar trajectory of bright new future, critical condemnation, lack of maintenance and, finally, rediscovery and appreciation. The South Bank complex was constructed to represent the start of a new era of social and cultural progressivism that grew out of the popular exhibition, The Festival of Britain, in 1951 and then fell into disfavor and neglect. But now after a Rick Mather masterplan, it has become a glorious complex that fits into the London riverscape and skyline much as the slightly later Brutalist complex the Barbican Center has as well. The English capital has grown up around them, as if they had been there forever.

But this is exactly the point of Brutalism. It is an urban typology created to (re)introduce urbanism into cities bombed out due to wars or, as in the case of American cities, due to middle class flight to the suburbs. We must admit, however, that these Brutalist buildings pay little attention to their surroundings, gaining attention by standing out. In fact, they were conceived to be sculptural centers and emblems of an urbanism that barely existed in places like Goshen, Oklahoma City, and even Baltimore. The Mummers Theater was funded by a million dollar, Ford Foundation grant to bring a theater into the center city and while its architecture was controversial from the start, it succeeded in creating a distinguished urban center for this prairie town. Likewise Rudolph's Goshen government center, though it was also controversial, brought a sense of urbanism and dynamism to a county seat desperate to look to the future for answers to governance and daily life. Most of these buildings were primarily commissioned by civic groups and universities. Products of architectural individualism, they in fact operated as markers of communal values and cultural aspirations. Sadly, today's local politicians and business leaders seem only to want to look to an earlier, pre-20th century model of governance and Brutalist buildings don't fit that model. **WILLIAM MENKING**

BATTLE LANDMARKIA continued from front page battle. According to Intro Bill Number 846, new guidelines would require City Planning to review Landmark Commission designations in economic terms to "analyze the impact of the designation" and "specifically consider the relationship between the development potential of all properties affected by the designation, both public and private." The bill would provide City Council a rationale by which to deny landmark designations by pitting long-term planning goals against individual or district landmarking.

Preservationist Theodore Grunewald, who sued Landmarks and Vornado last year to stop renovations at the Manufacturers Hanover building, said that the new measures represent the "gelding" of the Landmarks law. "Taken together, most of the 11 proposed bills will effectively hollow out the Landmarks Law from the inside out," he testified.

In addition, the bills would limit the commission's oversight of materials used on landmarked buildings, develop a survey division at Landmarks to conduct periodic assessments of historic buildings, allow community boards and borough boards to mandate certain Requests for Evaluations, extend protections of historic buildings from nearby construction projects, and facilitate the addition of green infrastructure. Landmarks rebutted each of the 11 bills, with Landmarks' director of intergovernmental and community relations, Jenny Fernandez, pointing out that they "would significantly alter the discretionary, flexible, and nuanced process."

Intro Bill Number 846 would provide City Council with the tools necessary to deny wholesale redistricting. In her opening statement, Fernandez fought back, taking direct issue with the bill, saying that proposed City Planning analysis is too focused on available floor and area development. Mike Slattery, senior vice president at the Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY), rejected Landmark's reasoning. "We keep hearing about the value that a landmark districting creates and yet economic impact is not supposed to be a consideration," he said.

Preservationists fear that the bills have immediate implications for development near Grand Central. In an email, Grunewald called the pending legislation "the 'greased rail' to the destruction of Midtown." With preservationists wary of Midtown upzoning and developers gearing up to revamp Park Avenue, it would seem that the testing ground for the 11 bills might play out at the heart of the city.

Dismissing fears of upzoning, Slattery added that significant buildings deserve protection, but that landmarking has morphed into an antidevelopment tool wielded by NIMBY zealots. "No one is looking to modify Lever House or the Seagram Building, but at one point there was a proposal to designate all of Park Avenue. Could you imagine what that would do to the heart of the office district?"

Columbia University's professor of real estate Vishaan Chakrabarti concurred, though he was careful to distinguish the residential area from that of the commercial district near Grand Central. "This conversation about Park Avenue is extraordinarily dangerous—to landmark our business district would create a global financial shock," he said. "In London, they made very judicious decisions to develop the central business district near the City of London. We can do that or we can go the route of Paris and lose hundreds of thousands of jobs." **TOM STOELKER**

BURIED INSPIRATION continued from front page

The team peels back the Serpentine Gallery's lawn, excavating 5 feet to reach the water table, revealing the footprints, foundations, and topography of its predecessors. A new ground plane tracing the tangled intersections of previous pavilions creates differentiated seating areas while eleven columns extruded from fragments of old foundations along with a new column prop up a bowl of collected rainwater/reflection pool hovering above. "A distinctive landscape emerges out of the reconstructed foundations which is unlike anything we could have invented," the team said in a statement. "The three-dimensional reality of this landscape

is astonishing and it is also the perfect place to sit, stand, lie down or just look and be amazed."

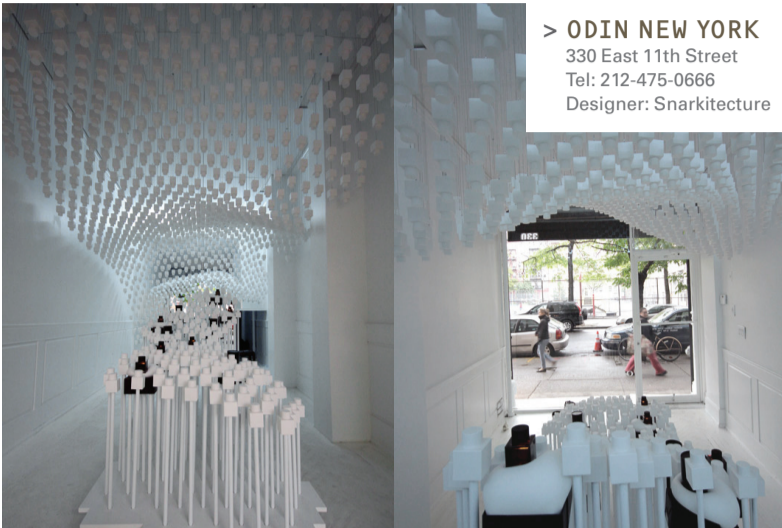
From the Serpentine lawn, the pavilion appears as a contrast of reflected sky and exposed earth. The entire subterranean seating area to be covered in cork—chosen for its texture and smell. For special events, the rooftop reflecting pool can be drained into the seating space below, where it soaks back into the ground allowing the space above to be used as a dance floor or elevated platform.

"As we dig down into the earth we encounter a diversity of constructed realities such as telephone cables and former foundations," the group said in a statement.

"Like a team of archaeologists, we identify these physical fragments as remains of the 11 Pavilions built between 2000 and 2011. Their shape varies: circular, long and narrow, dots and also large, constructed hollows that have been filled in." They added: "These remains testify to the existence of the former Pavilions and their greater or lesser intervention in the natural environment of the park."

The pavilion represents Herzog & de Meuron and Ai Weiwei's first jointly designed structure in the U.K. The installation will run from July 1 through October 14 this year, presented as part of the London 2012 Festival at the end of the London Cultural Olympiad, a celebration concurrent with the London 2012 Olympics. **BRANDEN KLAYKO**

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COURTESY SNARKITECTURE

Temporary architecture often serves as a liberating typology for experimental design, due to its nature as a short-term investment and low financial risk. For the same reason, young architects are often hired to try out new and experimental alternatives to traditional building. Brooklyn-based design firm Snarkitecture's pop-up retail space for high-end perfumery Odin is an example of what can go right with experimentation.

Sensitive to the six-week lifespan of the store in New York's East Village, the architects created a white-on-white installation out of more than 1,500 small gypsum-cement castings derived from the form of Odin's signature bottle, a simple glass cube with a cylindrical cap. Snarkitecture wanted their all-white architecture to contrast with Odin's precious all-black bottles, of which only a few are featured at the store. One undulating plane of the white castings is suspended from the ceiling and is mirrored on the ground plane, supported on white rods. The wave-like form will offer patrons a moment of contemplation about the striking spatial effects created by the repetition of a simple object and will also highlight the small black bottles for sale, adrift in the milky sea of cast bottles. The small storefront serves as an ideal backdrop, creating an exaggerated effect for minimal cost. **MATT SHAW**

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RENAISSANCE CRITIC

It's common knowledge that before **Michael Kimmelman** became the *New York Times'* architecture critic he used to be one of the paper's art critics. But did you know that before delving into the visual arts, Kimmelman had a passion for the lively arts? He even considered a professional career as a concert pianist. In fact, on his days off you can still find Kimmelman performing, most recently on May 19 and 20 with Bargemusic, a chamber music group that holds concerts on a barge near the Brooklyn Bridge. The pianist in a quartet, Kimmelman was down for a little Hayden, Beethoven, and Mozart. "Hoping people will come to my concerts at Bargemusic," the critic tweeted beforehand, in what may count as one his few reviews of an actual, if nautical, structure. "Nice program, cool place."

CALA-TASTROPHE?

Esquerra Unida, a leftist party in Valencia, Spain has **Santiago Calatrava** in its virtual crosshairs. *The Guardian* reports that the group is behind the website calatravatelaclava.com (loose translation: "Calatrava bleeds you dry"), which asserts that Calatrava's City of the Arts and Sciences for Valencia, a vast new complex of culture buildings, has already cost the local government one billion euros—100 million of which Esquerra Unida says it can prove has gone to Calatrava, who is now based in Zurich, tax-free.

HOT POT

Edward Barber and **Jay Osgerby**, the designers of the 2012 Olympic torch, recently dished in a video for the Victoria & Albert Museum that the 8,000 perforations in its metal skin represent the number of runners who will relay the flame from the ancient site of Olympia. But the designer of London's Olympic cauldron, architect **Thomas Heatherwick**, is keeping mum at the request of opening ceremonies maestro, film director **Danny Boyle**. "The cauldron is the most secretive thing we have ever worked on," Heatherwick told *Time Out Hong Kong*. "We've had to shred every single drawing of the Olympic cauldron as soon as we've reviewed it in the office. The models are all locked up in a special safe-box."

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Peter Walker and Rogers Marvel's Constitution Gardens.



Gustafson Guthrie Nichol and Davis Brody Bond's Union Square at the foot of the Capitol.

Constitution Gardens' 1970s-era modernist landscape by Dan Kiley and SOM, incorporating an aquatic shelf on the banks of the existing biomorphic pond that enhances the site's ecology while improving drainage issues. RMA designed a diagrid pavilion hovering over the landscape and basin. "We felt the best way to put architecture into the garden was to contrast the landscape with a beautiful shell, not to compete with other buildings on the mall," said Rob Rogers, principal at RMA, which was also selected in July 2011 to renovate the adjacent President's Park at the White House.

At the center of the mall, the Sylvan Theater has been reimaged as a terraced hillside forming an amphitheater by OLIN and Weiss/Manfredi. A delicately flowing green roof emerges from a hillock to the south of the monument. OLIN previously was involved in 2004 with a security upgrade to the site.

With the three designs in place, the trust has begun fundraising for the combined \$700 million project, with \$350 million in projected private donations to be matched by the National Park Service and Department of Interior. The first groundbreaking could happen as early as 2014. **BK**

DOWN TRODDEN NO MORE
continued from front page
Theater. The jury, which included Thom Mayne, Craig Hodgetts, and Michael Gericke among others, shied away from the theatrical undulations of Diller Scofidio + Renfro and Hood Design and twisting pavilions by Balmore Associates and WORKac, opting for arguably more subtle and reflective designs.

At Union Square, Gustafson Guthrie Nichol and Davis Brody Bond (DBB) chose to extend the U.S. Botanic Garden on the south and the Congressional Youth Garden on the north to establish the park's edges. A large reflecting pool

criss-crossed by walking paths and flanked by smaller pools can be drained, providing programmatic variety for festivals and special events.

"The critical challenge to transform a space that is so fundamentally defined by its monumental setting into an inviting and accessible place for people," wrote Carl Krebs, partner at DBB, in an email, "and to do this in a way that does not diminish the site's powerful presence or dilute its role as forecourt to the Capitol."

To the west, Rogers Marvel Architects (RMA) and Peter Walker & Partners have proposed intensifying

RELICS OF THE INDUSTRIAL PAST BECOME CREATIVE PLAYERS IN A SMALL TOWN'S CULTURAL REVIVAL



PAUL WARCHOL

REBIRTH IN BETHLEHEM

For generations no one imagined Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, without steel. But after the bankruptcy of the steel plant, the city had to rethink its identity. Situated as it is, between New York and Philadelphia, reimagining the plant as cultural magnet seemed equally implausible, but that

is what it has become. Bethlehem kept its silenced furnaces as both conduit to a shared past and a backdrop for contemporary culture. With the completion of a new band shell called the Levitt Pavilion and a redesigned streetscape, both by Philadelphia-based WRT, the city

has an arts attraction and town plaza so close to the plant, one can almost touch the preserved stacks. Given the area's bittersweet past, it was an emotionally charged project. For WRT principal Antonio Fiol-Silva, just knowing that the plant produced the steel for the Empire

WRT designed the centerpiece band-shell in a revamped streetscape.

State Building and the Golden Gate Bridge was humbling. "You realize what projects came out of here, and you think that it shouldn't have ended," he said. For many years the site was fenced off, but as Bethlehem Redevelopment Authority completed phases of the project, the gates came down. Former steel workers began to return to the plant. "They would just sit quietly and stare," recalled WRT landscape architect David Ostrich.

WRT's asymmetric and cantilevered solution for the pavilion is quite unlike the robust practicality of the old plant. The pavilion's form and positioning was dictated by the need to hold an audience of 2,500 people on a long, narrow stretch, once a straight utilitarian street that ran the length of the plant. The street now curves to accommodate a pitched amphitheater of green lawn. Beveled planes of rusted steel, concrete, and ivy beds shore up the lawn in angled gestures that recall bent metal. Unabashed use of bolts and rivets add graphic punctuation to the detailing, while blond bonded-aggregate paving ushers families toward a play area. Fluorescent light strips hide inside squared arches made of galvanized steel. Elsewhere, Endicott's Manganese Ironspot bricks flow

underfoot toward another curved plaza that fronts two new buildings housing the local PBS affiliate and ArtsQuest, the performing art center that programs the pavilion's entertainment.

The pavilion, engineered by Simpson Gumpertz & Heger in Boston, appears to lurch out from beneath the rusty plant. The underframe is exposed through perforated steel panels, all fabricated in Pennsylvania by Levan Associates. At stage left, the canopy covering the performers reaches out toward the audience, supported in the foreground by angled planes that push the canopy back up. The exposed stage that is left forms an intentionally incomplete proscenium arch. The narrow constraints of the site forced backstage facilities to be placed in a long, lean rectangular building to the left of the stage, making the form appear to be shooting out from the tension of the incomplete arch.

The plant, which once seemed like a sure thing in Bethlehem, now serves as a mountainous backdrop to the pavilion's stage. Fiol-Silva said the designers wanted to push the boundaries of steel to create something of a monument that spoke to the past and future. "It's a sculptural piece that looks like a project that is still to be completed," he said—not unlike the city.

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BANKING ON BIKES

Beginning this July, thousands of hefty-sized, bright-blue bicycles will begin swarming the streets of New York. The long-anticipated bike share system—expected to become the largest in North America—will begin its phased-in deployment with 420 stations. By Spring 2013, there will be 10,000 bikes scattered across Manhattan, northwest Brooklyn, and Long Island City, Queens. Already popular in Europe, Boston, and Washington, D.C., bike share is being billed as a new public transportation system that complements existing subway and bus services.

On May 7, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and NYCDOT Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan announced that Citibank had been selected as the system's primary sponsor through a five-year \$41 million pledge with MasterCard contributing another \$6.4 million. "We're getting an entirely new transportation network without spending any taxpayer

money," Bloomberg said at the announcement. "Who thought that could be done?" As part of the agreement, New York's bike share system will officially be known as Citi Bikes.

The pricing model for Citi Bikes promotes short-term trips over leisurely, day-long cruises, which fits with cycling trends observed in the city by advocacy group Transportation Alternatives (TA). Caroline Samponaro, TA's director of bicycle advocacy, said the

average bike trip in New York is around three miles at 12 miles per hour. Annual passes cost \$95.00, weekly passes are \$25.00, and daily passes \$9.95. Each provides 30 to 45 minutes of free ride time, with stiff penalties for overages. "The system is working best when people are checking in and out," said Samponaro. Bikes in other cities average around 5 rides per day.

Bikes will be checked out from 600 stations across the city. Station locations were determined in an extensive public outreach campaign, with 10,000 suggestions crowdsourced on the city's web site.

BK



BRANDEN KLAYVO

HIRIKO, MON AMOUR! continued from front page electric two-seater is just 6 inches shorter than a Smart. But parked, it folds to almost half that length; three, nested together, fit a standard parking space. Hirikos will be priced at about \$16,000, but they will not be marketed to individuals. Fleets will be deployed, as in bike-sharing schemes. Likely the first cities to get them will include Malmö, Barcelona, Berlin, Hong Kong, and San Francisco.

The Hiriko was developed by MIT's Smart Cities Research Group. "Actually, we came up with our name after we started work on the car," said PhD candidate and project manager Ryan Chin. It's "not an individual car but part of a network of urban vehicles that connect to existing transit and energy networks, with cities being the organism it resides in."

The vehicle employs "by-wire" technology, which replaces the mechanical linkages of conventional cars' steering, acceleration, and braking systems. Instead, those functions are performed by each of the wheels, responding to electronic signals as the driver manipulates a yoke—picture what an airplane pilot uses—to indicate forward motion, turning, and braking. Hiriko's four identical wheel modules all perform those three functions, making the car maneuverable enough to spin on its own axis. That modularity optimizes economies of scale in production, while the lack of mechanical gear allows for compactness and its featherweight.

Cool technology. But Chin added, "At some point this is no longer a pretty, transforming car. It's not owned by anyone but it's a civic thing." That may require a conceptual leap over traditional hot-wheels hype.

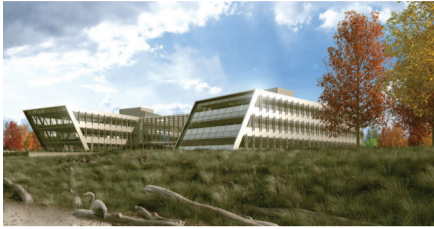
The comparable model is bike sharing. In fact, one member of the MIT group has

become "a world expert on bike-sharing logistics." Even that is not ideal. "There's a redistribution problem when bikes end up in the wrong places. Currently, Barcelona loses around 17 million euros a year just to redistribute bicycles on trucks. And you couldn't do that with cars easily." Another challenge: the strain on a city's electric grid from adding thousands of cars, with less than 100 miles' range, needing frequent recharge.

In the United States, aside from the not insignificant matter of altering the culture of mobility, there are legal issues. Some communities do allow "neighborhood electric vehicles"—think golf carts—with top speeds of 25 mph. Like them, the Hiriko is not meant for highways. Still, said Chin, "You need another class of vehicle [like the Hiriko] above that with shelter, signals, and a certain level of safety," and higher permitted speeds. "The only way we're going to get headway is to deploy vehicles like the one we've designed in places that allow them, and have them flourish to the point where the public says, 'We need a policy change.'" **JONATHAN LERNER**



COURTESY MIT MEDIA LAB



COURTESY ZGF ARCHITECTS

Left: ZGF Architect's Federal Center South in Seattle; Below: Will locally-crafted doors for a courthouse in Jackson, Mississippi be nixed by the GSA in the future?

GSA SHOCK ABSORBERS continued from front page Architecture must not "become the butt of jokes, like the \$500 hammer," he said, referring to the Pentagon's infamous procurement debacle of the mid 1980s. Architecture plays a significant symbolic role, he added, that "has to be talked about with the same rigor of patriotism."

Former GSA chief architect Ed Feiner, who established Design Excellence in 1996 and now runs the Design Leadership Forum at Perkins+Will, is not too concerned about the program's staying power since it's codified in law. He also made the distinction that the scandal was limited to a particular division within the Public Building Service's Design and Construction program, not Design Excellence. The two programs are independent, he noted: "Design Excellence is a procurement process, the way that they select architects, and that shouldn't change."

Nevertheless, with the resignation of GSA chief Martha Johnson, interim director Dan Tangherlini has ordered a top-down review of the entire agency. And Congress is conducting its own hearings. *The Washington Post* reports that some House Republicans, like California Rep. Jeff Denham, want the agency to be dismantled. It's a stance that Democrats, such as Delaware's Eleanor Holmes, think extreme, though she found conflicts with the agency conducting real estate deals while managing contracts.

The controversial conference was organized specifically for the Pacific Rim region, which includes Arizona, California, Hawaii, and Nevada. With the release of the report, travel budgets for the Northwest, Greater Southwest, and the Rocky Mountains regions were all reduced.

"There's definitely been a tightening of the belt," ZGF Architects principal Todd Stine said of his firm's work with the GSA. "Normal things like basic travel have been tough. It makes it a bit more challenging when the client can't come to the site." As part of the Recovery Act, ZGF and Sellen Construction were awarded the contract to redevelop the Federal Center South, the district headquarters for the Army Corps of Engineers in Seattle. The \$74 million project,

with its eco-friendly adaption of an old building with a new energy-efficient skin, is just the sort of aggressive design approach from Design Excellence that could influence national building trends.

Though Tangherlini canceled all pending interagency conferences, he did not put a stop to the Moynihan Symposium, celebrating the 50th anniversary of Moynihan's report to President Kennedy that created the Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture. The report was the late senator's treatise on how good design advances American values. "There's been some concern that the conference will call attention to the controversy," Hugh Hardy, who worked with Feiner to develop Design Excellence, said two weeks before the event. "They're all very on edge." Hardy recently completed a courthouse in Jackson, Mississippi, containing the design flourishes and regional gestures that could easily be appreciated by architectural aficionados but lambasted by beltway penny pinchers, particularly elements that spring from the Art in Architecture aspect of the program.

The courtroom doors for Hardy's project involved Mississippi-based artist Fletcher Cox spending four years to locally harvest pecan wood. The steel door pulls alone took a local blacksmith months to perfect. Hardy explained that the craftsmanship was meant to convey authority and reverence. "You need to make clear you were involved with an institution that knew what they were doing," he said. The architect added that the Design Excellence program has always been under threat. "There is a feeling out there that federal buildings should be standardized and we should knock them out like bread boxes."

The conference, which took place on May 11, offered perhaps the best chance for the GSA to state their case for high quality architecture over standardization. Moynihan's three-point policy called for all federal buildings to "embody the finest contemporary American architectural thought" and that the "development of an official style must be avoided." Separating the real estate acquisition from the design, as proposed by Rep. Holmes, would preclude the third principle that the "choice and development of the building site should be considered the first step of the design process." **ts**



COURTESY H3 HARDY COLLABORATION

GATE EXPECTATIONS



Technology-based "smart classrooms" need smart buildings to be effective. **Westchester Community College's Gateway Center**, designed by **Ennead Architects**, meets the challenge. Erected on the college's Valhalla campus to aid new Americans in gaining essential skills for the technologically sophisticated workplace, its long-span steel trusses enable an array of spaces programmed for the dynamic exchange of ideas. More than an inspirational entryway for students preparing for 21st century careers, the **LEED Gold-certified building** is a demonstration of the college's commitment to sustainability—a symbol that the campus is investing in the future in more ways than one.

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Architect: Ennead Architects
Structural Engineer: Leslie E. Robertson Associates
Photographer: Jeff Goldberg/Esto

URBAN TOWNHOUSE



COURTYARD HOUSE



BROADWAY PREFABRICATED HOUSING



MARINE SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION GENETICS CENTER



At a recent competition to design a vertical campus for the prestigious Collegiate School on Manhattan's Upper West Side, several well-known New York firms showed up with snazzy renderings in hand. Peter Gluck did not bring a proposal. When asked by the selection committee why he arrived empty-handed, he responded, "How can we give you a solution when we don't know the problem yet." Gluck got the job.

While anecdotal, the Collegiate competition gets to the heart of the way Gluck's design-build firm works: architects are embedded with the project

from inception through construction.

A series of studies in Gluck's Manhattanville office devoted to Collegiate document the early stages of the project. Coordinating with teachers, parents, and administrators, the architects developed hundreds of multicolored flow charts that map the class schedules, weekend events, and sports activities. Brightly colored foam blocks with labels like "English," "science," "main dining," and "art" sit beneath a clear acrylic stand-in for the building. The foam blocks representing the various programs

get shuffled about inside the floors of the building in a Rubik's Cube-like fashion. The exercise is designed to coordinate flow and, eventually, form.

Just as the architects are on hand for the clients in the initial design process, they're also on hand for the subcontractors during construction. This integrated approach carries through to drawings. Generations of plans and drawings, developed on-site with the subcontractors, become tools for communication rather than dictums handed down from above.

TS

URBAN TOWNHOUSE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

This slim East Side townhouse on an 18-foot lot gently nudges its elderly neighbors with a clean-lined modernist riff on their classic red-brick facades. The pierced brick pattern is scattered across a powder-coated aluminum plate rain screen manufactured by Leed Himmel. A warm white interior accented in varying hues of walnut becomes a cathedral for books, with shelves running up the height of the three-story building. Long vertical openings cut into the back of the street wall are paired with stout horizontal openings behind the screen to flood the interior with natural light during the day and create a varied light box by night.

BROADWAY PREFABRICATED HOUSING
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

A lot on Broadway in the northern Manhattan neighborhood of Inwood has sat empty for years. The architect donned his developer hat on this project, working with Jeff Brown and Kim Frank of Porter House condo fame. Gluck wanted to rethink the contemporary apartment building. Instead of a nostalgic take on nearby art deco apartments, the firm sought 21st-century solutions for infill, namely, off-site construction. The 28 prefab modular units of varying lengths will be stacked one atop the other to create a shifting facade alternating with full balconies. The generous depth of the lot will also allow for a courtyard.

COURTYARD HOUSE
ASPEN, COLORADO

The term "nestled into the hillside" can be taken quite literally with this Rocky Mountain retreat, which not only plays off the hillside planes but also is part of them. The sustainable attributes of a green roof are supplemented with white oak sunscreens and solar panels integrated into the south face of the building. The panels in turn feed a thermal system that heats the pool, spa, and radiant floor. Because the firm was contractor for the project, it was able to cut costs in the design of a system that would normally require individual electronic controls for separate loops feeding the pool, spa, and floor. Instead, the architect-builders designed one main loop to feed all three.

MARINE SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION
GENETICS CENTER, DUKE UNIVERSITY
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Gluck's designs for Duke University's Marine Lab take the firm to new levels of complexity, highlighting the university's comfort level with design/build. The building's pinwheel-like floor plan places offices and collaborative bullpens beneath the all-important labs above, thereby assuring that tidal waters on Pivers Island never reach the sensitive equipment. Indoor/outdoor spaces on the top floor facilitate what the firm calls "collision commons" for interaction and debate, while ground floor spaces, called "barges," stand askew. The perpendicular angles create outdoor rooms that frame the water views and provide more space for informal interactions.



COURTESY OMA

UNVEILED

MARINA ABRAMOVIC INSTITUTE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF PERFORMANCE ART

When performance artist Marina Abramovic began to contemplate her own legacy, she thought beyond biographies, retrospectives, or monuments and instead began to develop a method of generating the kind of experiences she valued, one that would allow her kind of performances to continue long after the artist was no longer present. Starting in late 2014, the Marina Abramovic Institute for the Preservation of Performance Art (MAI) in Hudson, New York, will present “long

duration” performances lasting a minimum of six hours and also house facilities intended to initiate the public into performance art. The institute will occupy an old 20,000-square-foot theater that was purchased by Abramovic in 2007. Shohei Shigematsu and Rem Koolhaas of OMA are redesigning its interior. Shigematsu compared the concept for the institute to the experience of attending a baseball game (“long and sometimes very boring”), where the main spectacle unfolds below on the field but plenty of equally engaging activities happen at the same time in and around the grandstands. OMA will leave the theater’s 1929 brick facade but insert a new box

that functions as a central performance space with 650 seats. Wrapping around the box will be a fitness space, a library, and classrooms, along with rooms dedicated to meditation, levitating beds powered by magnets, and crystals, which Abramovic believes have regenerative powers. The key feature of OMA’s design is that all these spaces are visually connected back to the center, creating a series of layers that blur the boundaries between audience and artist.

MOLLY HEINTZ

Architect: OMA
Client: Marina Abramovic
Location: Hudson, NY
Completion Date: Late 2014

AT DEADLINE

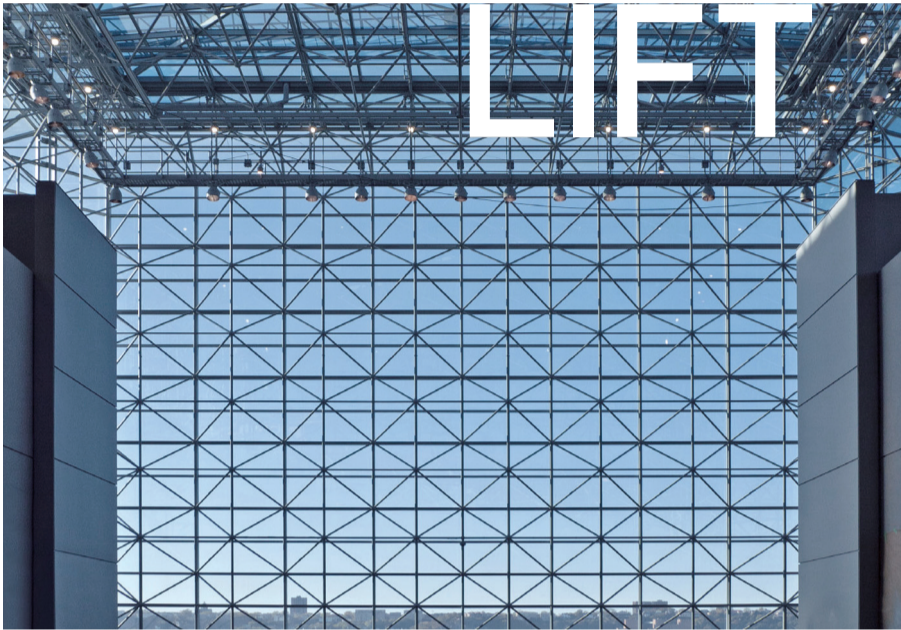
PORT PULLS BACK FROM AESTHETIC THRUST

In a spat with the Port Authority and the Durst Organization architect David Childs publicly protested the stripped down version of his designs for the spire atop One World Trade. The galvanized steel replacement would save the Port/Durst approximately \$20 million. Douglas Durst told *The Wall Street Journal* that the multifaceted fiberglass and steel original designed with artist Kenneth Snelson would cost too much to maintain and should have been better designed. The day after the dispute hit the front page of the *Journal*, Port Authority Executive Director David Foye reiterated his intention to refocus the Port’s resources on infrastructure and not on real estate. Speaking at the May 11th Megastructures Conference held by Columbia’s Center for Urban Real Estate, Foye was blunt: “Multibillion dollar projects by starchitects don’t cut it anymore.” Though he praised efforts at the Trade Center he indicated that the Port has no business dealing in real estate. “Governments don’t have the animal spirits to get real estate done,” he said.”

CORNELL CHOOSES THOM MAYNE FOR TECH CAMPUS

Cornell University has named 2005 Pritzker Prize winner Thom Mayne as architect for the first building at the Technion-Cornell Innovation Institute, the new tech campus on Roosevelt Island. Mayne bested an all-star list, including Rem Koolhaas of OMA, Diller, Scofidio + Renfro, Steven Holl, and SOM. The choice of Mayne, whose iconic building 41 Cooper Square still jams traffic at Astor Place, hints that Cornell is looking for a traffic stopper of its own on the East River. “It was a nice list; all the usual talent, but I knew we had a good shot,” said Mayne, on his way back to his second home base in LA, “because I could speak intelligently to their three main areas of interest: an innovative educational environment; connective urbanism; sustainability. I can walk the walk.” A masterplan by SOM aimed to establish that the main 150,000 square foot building would not only be a net-zero building, but, in the words of SOM principal Roger Duffy, “not an object building.” Mayne said that the first meetings on plan and program were only now taking place, adding that “nothing is fixed at this point; it needs to be open-ended.” The notion of a prescriptive master plan, he noted, went out with Victor Gruen in the 70s.

SPACE



Since its construction in 1982, the **Jacob K. Javits Center** has been one of the world’s leading examples of space-frame design. But the **I.M. Pei & Partners**-designed exhibit space needed updating to put its best face forward for the 3.5 million visitors it receives each year. So owners engaged **Epstein Global** and **FXFowle Architects**, who developed the recladding program that is dramatically increasing the building’s transparency and energy efficiency. Targeting LEED Silver with a glazing system that will enable the building to exceed energy code requirements by 25 percent, the new face of Javits proves that being old doesn’t have to mean retiring.

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Architect: Epstein Global, FXFowle Architects
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STOWAWAY

NEW SHELVING AND STORAGE MAXIMIZES MODULARITY WHILE INVITING CUSTOMIZATION

JENNIFER K. GORSCHÉ

1



3



2



5



4

COURTESY RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS

1 MOGENS KOCH CARL HANSEN & SON

Carl Hansen & Son has introduced Mogens Koch's composite bookcase system, part of the broader selection of Danish design icons now available in the United States from the company. Mogens Koch's folding chair is also available.

carlhansen.com

2 TRIA MOBLES 114

Launched last month, Mobles 114's Tria is a shelving system with freestanding or fixed vertical supports and metal and wooden shelves. Tria's accessory collection includes customizable options for residential spaces as well as offices and other shared spaces.

mobles114.com

3 MIXTE LIGNE ROSET

Designed by Mauro Lipparini, Mixte's elements can be used alone or in concert with other pieces in the line to create customized storage cabinetry that includes sideboards, cupboards, and bookcases. A range of colors and finishes are available.

ligne-roset-usa.com

4 PRIORITY STORAGE KIMBALL OFFICE

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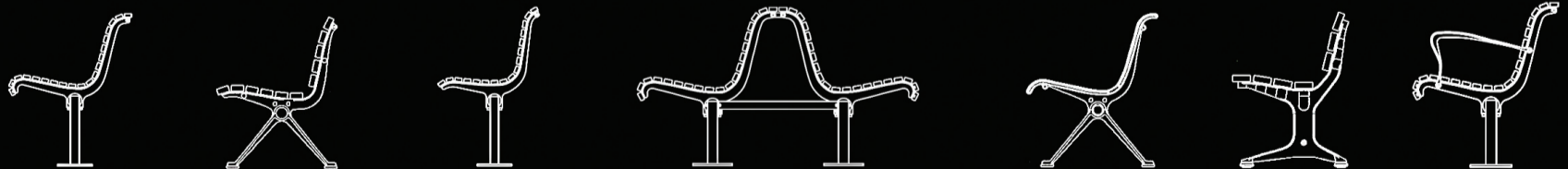
5 ICON WALL SYSTEM LERIVAL

Made of powder-coated aluminum, Lereval's Icon Wall System is designed by New York-based architect Ali Tayar. A modular alternative to traditional office furniture, the system includes shelving, partitions, and work surfaces for standard, mini, and corner units.

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WHERE HAVE ALL THE FLOWERS GONE?

Greening the city has meant a glorious and historical expansion of its parks and waterfront amenities. But building new parks is far more complicated than planting bulbs and bushes. And even as the city has demonstrated great initiative in creating new parks, how it plans to maintain them—physically as well as financially—is far more uncertain. **Caitlin Blanchfield** takes a stroll through the variegated schemes for keeping up New York's parks and esplanades.

Above: With stalled development undermining its public/private funding model, the Hudson River Park does not generate enough income to pay for maintenance and infrastructural problems.

Opposite, top: Hampered by non-starter RFPs, Pier 40 still needs \$100 million in repairs.

Below: Hudson River Park's popularity has influenced waterfronts in cities as far away as Paris and Sydney.

New York City is currently in its greatest period of park expansion since the 1930s. With 29,000 acres of land already in the stewardship of the Parks Department, tracts flanking the Hudson and East Rivers are being turned over to green space, restored wetlands, and recreational use. Where once there were rotting piers and toxic sludge, New Yorkers kayak in the Hudson and schoolchildren catch (and release) sea horses under the Manhattan Bridge. As Nancy Webster, executive director of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy, put it, New York's new parks "redefine an understanding of local geography and provide a unique sense of place for New Yorkers" by recapturing its identity as a port city.

Cutting the ribbon is one thing. Keeping a park usable, healthy, and engaging for decades to come, quite another. Capital projects far outstrip park maintenance in the City's budget. According to Parks



“Maintenance and operations have a separate and vastly smaller stream than capital projects, yet capital design has no knowledge of maintenance and operations funding, which should dictate design strategies,” said Deborah Marton, senior vice president of the New York Restoration Project.

Commissioner Adrian Benepe, the budget for capital projects, which includes opening new parks and restoration projects that require heavy construction, is around \$1.6 billion annually. The maintenance budget, which is dedicated to horticultural care and facility upkeep, is around \$300 million.

“Maintenance and operations have a separate and vastly smaller stream than capital projects, yet capital design has no knowledge of maintenance and operations funding, which should dictate design strategies,” said Deborah Marton of the New York Restoration Project, an organization that functions as a wealth reallocator, distributing funding from private donors, city, and state across the boroughs, particularly in the Bronx, Harlem, and Central Park. “Parks are often allowed to fall into disrepair because they will then get capital dollars. We’ve inherited 19th-century ideas about how cities and budget are

structured. Much of the city’s public spaces are in the jurisdiction of different organizations: the Housing and Preservation Authority, the MTA, Port Authority, and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services. This division is anathema to how we currently think about public spaces.”

With city and state funding providing just under 65 percent of current maintenance and operation budgets, ensuring that parks are properly maintained has fallen to strategic alliances of privately interested citizens and varying models of public/private partnerships committed to overseeing long-term sustainability and funding. While some, such as the Hudson River Park Trust and the Brooklyn Bridge Development Corporation are legislated entities, many other organizations, like friends groups working in small community parks, are entirely voluntary, leaving the places they

steward at the whim of charitable resources.

Approaching its 35-year anniversary, the Central Park Conservancy is a paragon of success for public/private partnerships. In the late 1970s, slashed budgets and municipal neglect had rendered the park both dangerous and in catastrophic disrepair, at which point concerned citizens banded together and formed the conservancy. Since then it has raised \$650 million and developed a sophisticated system for managing its 843 acres.

The key, said Conservancy president Douglas Blonsky, “is total vigilance.” Central Park is lucky. As Blonsky readily admits, it is the backyard of New York’s wealthiest residents and has a profile higher than any other park. Of a more than \$42 million operating budget, 85 percent comes from the prosperous patrons who are stacked in the high-rises framing its perimeter. Such a model is simply not plausible in places without the density and affluence of Central Park’s constituency.

“There is no one model that works; it’s not one size fits all. There can only be one Central Park Conservancy,” said Benepe. The parks commissioner advocates for entrepreneurship, saying that funding alliances arise organically to creatively meet the needs and conditions of each park. In the city’s recent park projects, that spirit has had a decidedly development-friendly bent. Brooklyn Bridge Park and Hudson River Park, both waterfront sites with complex programs incorporating recreation, leisure, and environmental remediation, have gone the way of rents, not altruism.

In the late 1980s, after Brooklyn’s waterfront had ceased to be the shipping hub of decades past and had deteriorated to house a dwindling number of warehouses, a group of concerned citizens rallied to turn the narrow space between Piers 1 and 5 into park lands, rather than the housing, retail, and parking development it had been slated to become. Advocates raised grants and secured capital funding for a build out, but because the cost of operating and maintaining a park on the waterfront is so high, Mayor Bloomberg and Governor Pataki decided that a different funding stream, separate from the Parks Department budget, should be created to ensure the long-term sustainability of the park. They established the Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation to operate commercial development on just under 10 percent of the 1.3-mile-long park. The Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy was subsequently created to manage programming. Based on financial models like Battery Park and Hudson River Park, the ground rent and taxes are intended to cover park maintenance and operations. On the city’s side it’s sacrificing ground rent and taxes, while the park allocates what could be public space to private use, which has incited some to lambast the park as a front lawn for high-end real estate, or as Project for Public Spaces’s Fred Kent put it, a “dead waterfront.”

At the southern tip, One Brooklyn Bridge Park is a luxury condominium complex with waterfront views and ground-floor retail (first store to move in: a dog spa). Since its completion in 2008, it has netted \$14.8 million dollars, which has funded all park security, maintenance, and waterfront infrastructure costs. As the park continues construction, a hotel and residence will go up on Pier 1; two residential buildings are slated for Pier 6. Retail development on Water Street and

John Street in Dumbo will also augment commercial revenue.

In part, this blend of private development and public space arose to meet the unique needs of the site: the pilings on which the park is built are subject to deterioration from salt water and aquatic microbes and must be checked every three years. As the river regains its vitality—the result of industry decline and waterfront greening— and teems with healthy, hungry critters, these pilings will need more frequent assessment and replacing. Reinforcing pilings on Pier 5 in concrete totaled \$11 million. According to Nancy Webster, revenue from commercial development has been a successful stream of income, capable of footing the self-sustaining maintenance and operations bill so far. With the first review since 2008 on the horizon, she predicts the model will continue to function, so long as the hotel and apartments bring in projected profits. Currently, negotiations are underway with developers for hotel and residential development on Pier 1. Retail locations on John Street in Dumbo and Pier 6 are still undeveloped, and the development corporation is looking into alternative revenue sources from the sale of properties near the park now owned by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., which would have to take place by the end of 2013. At the same time, portions of Piers 3, 4, and 6 remain unfunded, their future uncertain.

“One advantage to our model is that we will have capital reserve for unseen maintenance emergencies. We will have funds to react as things come up. In other parks when emergencies arise, the city cannot fix them in a timely fashion,” said Regina Myer, president of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation.

Across the river and on the west side of Manhattan, Hudson River Park faces such a predicament. The legislation that enacted Hudson River Park as a city- and state-owned entity in 1998 has proved too limited to allow for the kinds of development that would net the necessary funding. The issue at Hudson River Park is twofold, explains Madelyn Wils, the Hudson River Park Trust’s executive director. With two piers still undeveloped, the Trust does not have the income it anticipated when the act was first created. Unforeseen infrastructural problems are also proving a drain on the budget. For instance, the bulkheads on top of which the park is built and that hold up Route 9A (the Westside Highway) are costly to shore up; many of them failed to withstand Hurricane Irene last summer. Moreover, wooden Pier 40 is fast decaying after plans for its development were halted in 2006, when the Trust was unable to find a developer or development plan that met the stipulations of the Hudson River Park Act.

Compared to the uses at Brooklyn Bridge Park, the act is narrow, excluding housing, commercial office space, hotels, and manufacturing. What was likely intended to protect the waterfront from overly privatized development has left the Trust in a quagmire of dead-end Requests for Proposals (RFPs). Currently the park, which stretches from Midtown to Battery Park, allows commercial maritime and ferry ports, entertainment, retail, and commercial recreation. But, according to Wils, respondents to RFPs have rejected those uses, leaving the trust in search of viable commercial development in the park, and looking to make marinas or generate commercial activity in the water itself. Exacerbating these financial strains,

Below:

On Staten Island, Freshkills aims to be the next generation of parks offering passive and active recreation, native species, and innovative funding, such as harvesting methane for sale from the landfill beneath the meadows.

Bottom, left to right:

From shipping hub to hip address, Brooklyn Bridge Park supports commercial development on ten percent of its 1.3-mile length; picturesque wood piers in Brooklyn Bridge Park need to be replaced as aquatic borers increase with healthier waters;

urban kayaking is a popular in-water activity at all New York's waterfront parks.

Far right:

At 2,200 acres, Freshkills, here in a rendering by James Corner Field Operations, is three times the size of Central Park



FAR LEFT AND LEFT: COURTESY BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK DEVELOPMENT CORP



COURTESY JAMES CORNER FIELD OPERATIONS



WILLIAM T. DAVIS



COURTESY JAMES CORNER FIELD OPERATIONS

Chelsea Piers, tenants on three piers from 17th to 23rd streets, are suing the Trust to repair damages caused by marine borers over the past 20 years.

According to the Pier 40 Development Feasibility Study by HR&A Advisors and Tishman/AECOM, released privately in May, Pier 40 needs about \$100 million in repairs. The report found that the best source of ongoing income—adding the least traffic impact—would be 600 high-end rentals (as the Trust cannot sell its property) and a 150-room hotel. Other revenue-producing ideas under exploration include tax-exempt bonds and the more controversial Park Improvement District.

When created, the Trust was envisioned as an exemplar for in-water parks—influencing waterfronts in cities as far away as Paris and Sydney—but that has also exposed the park to unforeseen costs, such as retrofitting the decaying piers that are fodder for marine borers and battered by wind and brackish water. “Twenty years ago no one knew healthier water would mean more voracious aquatic borers, so you can’t build with wood. We’ve learned, for example, you have to use certain pavers to withstand water pressure from the currents,” Wils explained. Renting out berths for ferries and commercial cruise ships have racked in rent, but not enough to assuage these unpredicted high costs.

On Staten Island, Freshkills, the Parks Department most recent and expansive project, opening to the public later this year, must navigate not only an aquatic site, but also one atop a former landfill. Unlike Brooklyn Bridge Park and Hudson River Park, Freshkills—at 2,200 acres, three times the size of Central Park—does not have any trust, corporation, or conservancy in place to fund its annual operations. Not easily accessible by foot or subway, Freshkills is no magnet for the types of public/private partnerships that make other waterfront parks financially self-sustaining. According to Tara Kiernan of the New York City Parks Department, Parks is establishing a nonprofit Freshkills Park Alliance to fundraise for the park.

To be built out over the next 30 years, Freshkills represents the next generation in experimental models for how a park can coordinate a complex program of restoration, recreation, concessions, and passive enjoyment, almost all within the city’s budget. Using active landscape design guidelines

and the insights of 21st-century landscape architecture and responding to community input, Freshkills has been designed by James Corner Field Operations as a sustainable landscape using native plants and restoring natural habitats that, as long as healthy, will maintain themselves—and hopefully prevent it from meeting the same fate of Flushing Meadows Corona Park, where a pastoral park with shade trees and lawn grass built in the low-lying lands near Flushing Bay was overtaken by salt grasses and invasive species.

Capitalizing on less-than-idyllic site conditions, the sanitation department is already harvesting methane gas from the landfill below Freshkills, which it is selling back to National Grid, generating \$12 million in revenue for the city. The park is also partnering with research institutions and local universities to investigate water quality, soil restoration, habitat restoration, and reforestation, among other environmental issues, opening up opportunities for grant funding. New York Department of State, Division of Coastal Resources, and the Federal Highway Administration have thus far contributed \$12 million to the project.

While such initiatives dynamically wed stewardship and financial sustainability, they are but a drop in the bucket considering that Freshkills master plan has a \$100 million price tag—in part so high because of the cost of remediating landfill seepage. As construction is still so heavily underway, the park has yet to determine its future maintenance budget.

As landscape architect and Columbia University professor of landscape architecture Kate Orff points out, “Maintenance is a park.” And parks that go unmaintained have the potential to do more than just becoming unkempt; they can be dangerous. Parks budgets have been downsized 30 percent, according to Wils of the Hudson River Park Trust. Parks Commissioner Benepe voices concern about how parks will be able to retain funding in the future. As great parks projects continue to roll out, it’s essential to pair a zeal for creating public space with an even greater dedication to keeping them safe, accessible, and vital for the long run.

CAITLIN BLANCHFIELD IS A NEW YORK-BASED WRITER.

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MAY

WEDNESDAY 23
LECTURES

Samuel C. Florman:
Good Guys, Wiseguys,
and Putting Up Buildings—
A Life in Construction
6:30 p.m.
The Skyscraper Museum
39 Battery Pl.
skyscraper.org

Henry Gifford:
Building Mechanical
Systems—Designing
Key Systems that
Work in Harmony to
Yield a More Comfortable,
Economical, and Truly
Energy-Efficient Building
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

Steven Semes:
The Future of the Past:
A Conversation Ethic for
Architecture, Urbanism,
and Historic Preservation
8:00 PM
National Arts Club
15 Gramercy Park South
aiany.org

SYMPOSIUM

Roofing Design Conference:
Brian Chamberlin, Ken
Laremore, Joe Petty, et al.
9:00 a.m.
Philadelphia Center for
Architecture
1218 Arch St., Philadelphia, PA
aiaphiladelphia.org

FILM

Rocky Mountain Express
(Stephen Low, 2011), 45 min.
8:30 a.m.
AMC Loews Lincoln
Square 13
IMAX Theater
1998 Broadway
buildingcongress.com

THURSDAY 24
LECTURES

Scott W. Berg,
G. Martin Moeller, Jr.,
Wayne Quin, et al.
The Quirks of the
L'Enfant Plan
6:30 p.m.
National Building Museum
401 F St., Washington, D.C.
nbm.org

Scott Wilson:
Product Design
6:30 p.m.
The Greene Space
44 Charlton St.
cooperhewitt.org

Marilyn Jordan Taylor,
Cathryn Dwyre,
K. T. Anthony Chan:
Dirt
7:00 p.m.
Van Alen Books
30 West 22nd St.,
vanalen.org

Stephen F. Byrns:
Untermeyer Gardens—
Rediscovering America's
Greatest Forgotten Garden
7:00 p.m.
Library at the General Society
Institute of Classical
Architecture & Art
20 West 44th St.
classicist.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Occupy Wall Street:
Camera and Subject
6:30 p.m.
South Street Seaport Museum
12 Fulton St.
southstreetseaport
museum.org

EVENT

Constant Dullaart:
Premiere of Terms
of Service
7:00 p.m.
New Museum Theater
New Museum
235 Bowery
newmuseum.org

AEC-NYC Professionals
Circle at Häfele
5:30 p.m.
Häfele Showroom
25 East 26th St.
aecnyc.com

SATURDAY 26

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Transforming Function
2:00 p.m.
Lower Manhattan
Cultural Center
Governors Island,
Building 110
Carder Rd.
Imcc.net

Oh, Canada
6:00 p.m.
MASS MoCA
87 Marshall St.
North Adams, MA
massmoca.org

TOUR

Boston Architecture Cruises
10:00 a.m.
Dock at Atlantic Wharf
290 Congress St.
Boston, MA
bostonbyfoot.org

WITH THE KIDS

Family Program:
Paper Towers
10:30 a.m.
The Skyscraper Museum
39 Battery Pl.
skyscraper.org

TUESDAY 29
LECTURE

Raymond Richard Neutra:
The Significance and
Survival of the Richard
and Dion Neutra VDL
Studio/Residences in
Los Angeles
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Smarter Living:
The 2,000 Watt Society
10:00 a.m.
Philadelphia Center for
Architecture
1218 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA
aiaphiladelphia.org

WEDNESDAY 30
LECTURES

Midori Yamamura:
Art in Fin De Siècle Europe:
1880–1915
11:30 a.m.
The Donald B. and Catherine
C. Marron Atrium
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 St.
moma.org

Visionaries Series:

Maya Lin
7:00 p.m.
New Museum Theater
New Museum
235 Bowery
newmuseum.org

Andrew Blum
and Matt Weiland:
Tubes—A Journey to the
Center of the Internet
7:30 p.m.
Greenlight Bookstore
686 Fulton St.
Brooklyn, NY
greenlightbookstore.com

EVENT

Launch Party:
PLOT Volume 1
7:00 p.m.
Van Alen Books
30 West 22nd St.
vanalen.org

THURSDAY 31
LECTURES

Dr. Dan Czitrom:
Rediscovering Jacob Riis
5:00 p.m.
Museum of the
City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
mcny.org

A Conversation with the
National Mall Design
Competition Winners
6:30 p.m.
National Building Museum
401 F St.
Washington, D.C.
nbm.org

Eran Ben-Joseph and
June Williamson:
ReThinking a Lot—
The Design and
Culture of Parking
7:00 p.m.
Van Alen Books
30 West 22nd St.
vanalen.org

JUNE

FRIDAY 1

EXHIBITION OPENING

Andrew Zarou
6:00 p.m.
Robert Henry Contemporary
683 6th Ave.
Brooklyn, NY
roberthenrycontemporary
.com

SATURDAY 2
LECTURES

Rodrigo Corral,
Mike Koedinger,
Marta Cerda, et al.
We Made This—Post-Digital
Culture and Spanish Design
2:00 p.m.
Governors Island
Building 110
Carder Rd.
cooperhewitt.org

Alfredo Jaar
and Cindi Katz:
Laying Claim
2:00 p.m.
The Kitchen
512 West 19th St.
thekitchen.org

EVENT

World Science Festival
10:00 a.m.
Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 1
Furman St.
brooklynbridgepark.org

SUNDAY 3
LECTURE

Jennifer Gray:
Born Out of Necessity—
Contemporary
Industrial Design
11:30 a.m.
The Donald B. and Catherine
C. Marron Atrium
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 St.
moma.org

FILM

Vincent Scully: An Art
Historian Among Architects
(Edgar Howard and Tom
Piper, 2010), 56 min.
1:30 p.m.
Yale University Art Gallery
Yale University
1111 Chapel St.
New Haven, CT
artgallery.yale.edu

TUESDAY 5
LECTURE

Joseph Lstiburek:
Big City Adventures in
Building Science—Roofs,
Parapets, Balconies,
Storefronts, Curtain Walls,
and Foundations
8:00 a.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

SYMPOSIUM

Asian/Asian-American
Designers Forum
6:00 p.m.
Boston Society of Architects
290 Congress St.
Boston, MA
architects.org

A View from
the Future:
Edie Weiner,
Jane Chmielinski,
Michael De Chiara, et al.
8:00 a.m.
CUNY Graduate Center
Proshansky Auditorium
Beverly Willis Architecture
Foundation
365 Fifth Ave.
future.bwaf.org

THURSDAY 7

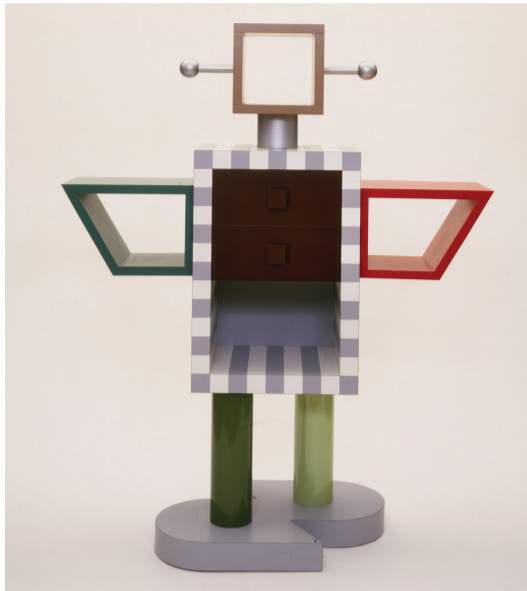
25 Architects Series:

David Jameson, FAIA
MATTER:
a double entendre
12:00 p.m.
District Architecture Center
421 7th St. NW
Washington, DC
aiadc.com

FRIDAY 8

EXHIBITION OPENING

Neon Art:
Folk, Found, & Fine
6:00 p.m.
Philadelphia Center for
Architecture
1218 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA
aiaphiladelphia.org



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2012 marks the 25th anniversary of the Architectural League Prize for Young Designers and Architects. Each year, up and coming talent, defined as less than ten years out of school, is recognized for excellent and inspiring work. This year's theme was No Precedent, and reflects the committee's perception of young architects' careers as "suggestive, speculative, and on the brink," according to a statement. The exhibition includes Jorge Arvizu, Ignacio del Rio, Emmanuel Ramirez, and Diego Ricalde, MMX Studio, Mexico City; Jimenez Lai, Bureau Spectacular, Chicago; Sean Lally, WEATHERS/Sean Lally (above), Chicago; Seung Teak Lee and Mi Jung Lim, STPMJ, Brooklyn; Michael Szivos, SOFTlab, New York; Koji Tsutsui, Koji Tsutsui & Associates, San Francisco and Tokyo.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 23, 2012

A partially built house outside Phoenix, AZ.



JASON GRIFFITHS

ON HISSING LAWNS

Manifest Destiny: A Guide to the Essential Indifference of American Suburban Housing
Jason Griffiths, Architectural Association Publications, \$35

Jason Griffiths' *Manifest Destiny: A Guide to the Essential Indifference of*

American Housing reveals in bold detail the formulaic nomenclatures, kit of parts,

and ad hoc solutions that have come to produce some of the most viral forms of

contemporary housing on the North American continent. These new suburbs are not anything like the ones from a generation ago: today's track houses are subliminally mass marketed, cleverly customizable, and (barring bubble bursts) profitably cost effective. The "essential indifference" that Griffiths speaks about is in effect the most critical aspect of his fascinating study: what dominates today's suburbs resembles a new development in human science—lab-coat-engineered home technologies for the ultimate in customer satisfaction.

Griffiths' prose is written bereft of flourish and his photographic images are relatively modest, but what does come across most effectively is his tenacious and forensic attention to details. As a husband-and-wife traveling duet, Jason Griffiths and Alex Gino crisscrossed the country, photographing with deadpan accuracy concrete curb breaks, customized house parts,

carpeted stairs with oddly paired banisters, and almost anything else deemed part of the American suburbs' "infrastructural picturesque."

If Griffiths' perspective stays focused on the house and its immediate surroundings, it is because he has clearly understood that the house is the totemic element behind a much larger suburban weltanschauung. Lars Lerup, in his latest book *One Million Acres & No Zoning*, acknowledges Sigmund Freud when he observes that the "city itself hides behind the facade of a house." It would be as true to say the suburb equally hides behind the facade of the house, but increasingly there is less and less distinction between what is certifiably a city and what is a suburb. Most of today's cities in the United States, if you take a closer look, are really suburbs. In absolute terms then, the suburban house is the primary element that codifies the entire environmental system.

Arguably, one should view

this apparently crude object of form making—the manufactured house—with much more respect. This is precisely what Griffiths' brilliantly unadorned essay, unfiltered photos, and crafted minimalist captions set out to accomplish. Griffiths demonstrates how each aspect about the suburban house formula is conceived to match the client's every whim and fancy. Or, to look at the flip side of his argument, nothing would be more superfluous than the hand of the architect, whose notion of proper design could not seem more irrelevant to this highly efficient industrialized process. "In short," writes Griffiths, "suburbia views architecture as the antithesis of its daily ritual."

So it should be no surprise that in the process we find ourselves admiring, thanks to Griffiths' observant prose, all the quirky aspects of suburban house-life that make up this incredible panorama of decentralization. Take, for example, his observations on

ONLY CONNECT

The City as Campus: Urbanism and Higher Education in Chicago
Sharon Haar, University of Minnesota Press, \$82.50; \$27.50pb

It is the right time to read architect and historian Sharon Haar's book on the rich, fraught relationship of universities and the cities they live in. We are in one of the great eras of university expansion. Whether it is the new Yale in Singapore, New York University in its own backyard, or the burgeoning institutions in China, the university is as close to the heart of our current cultural and economic aspirations as it has ever been and the buildings are there to prove it. As financial analysts put it about the economy, a correction is possible—the ranks of dissatisfied, underemployed university graduates are legion across continents. Yet short of a new, harsher recession, the build program will go on, the better for select universities to stand out in a crowded field.

And that crowded field is urban, because whether they still have a big green lawn or not, the majority of new and expanding campuses are in cities, and to Haar, it is time to demonstrate that the "urban campus" is a rich opportunity, not the poor relation of the bucolic tradition of colleges in the country. She sees value in this—believing that the university and the city have the capacity to be profoundly and productively connected, but that while the physical form matters, it has to be understood as a larger history of place. Today's debates on the future

of campuses in American cities—take New York University (NYU) in Greenwich Village, for example, where community opposition has been bitter—are informed by history, yet they often lack a framework for understanding the full complexity of what cities and universities have to offer each other. How much does it matter if a campus is "porous" or not? How can we align the priorities of the university—research, teaching, and service, in that order—with the values of a city? These questions have a history, and we'd do well not to repeat it.

Haar grounds her work in the close study of her subtitle, "Urbanism and Higher Education in Chicago," but also frames it in terms of larger American patterns. An architect by training, she analyzes the evolution of a very specific site, the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), a paradigmatic 1960s urban campus (first built as the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle Campus). She reviews both the evolution of the formal character of that design by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's (SOM) Walter Netsch, who came to the commission fresh off his triumph at the United States Air Force Academy, and the tense backstory of the release of the original master plan and the political protests that ensued. Her core research begins with the program and form of the turn-of-the-century

Hull-House Social Settlement, most of which was knocked down or relocated to make way for the new university. She then moves on to the recent era when SOM's distinctive skywalks and rooftop forum, were, in their turn, demolished as outmoded relics.

Her deep "section" of the campus' blocks, super and normal, is a compelling approach to uncovering the complexities of how we occupy cities, in which one generation has college-educated women living side by side with an impoverished immigrant community in Hull-House as an exercise in urban reform and social work. Two generations later a new generation aims squarely at providing another idealistic, if imperfect, reform, by expanding university education to a broad swath of the city's population.

Haar includes a welcome review of thinking about campus design, from Paul Venable Turner's estimable *Campus: An American Planning Tradition* (1987) to Thomas Bender's inspiring notion of a dynamic give-and-take between university and city (in the same vein as his enthusiasm for the public intellectual as described in *New York Intellect* [1988]). Haar's thesis is that the urban campus should not model itself as an enclave, but should be "imbricated" with the city, with forms and programs overlapping. Beyond UIC, she draws attention to the range of new campus types in Chicago, from downtown's compact and vertical "Loop U" of recycled office buildings and new construction to OMA's elevated-train-line-wrapping McCormick Tribune Campus Center (2003) at Illinois Institute of Technology.

In writing about Chicago as a living museum of university design, the

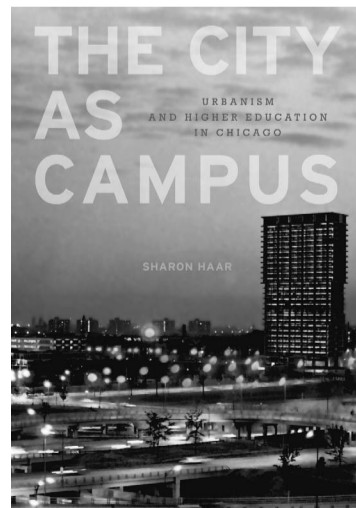
burden of the task Haar has set for herself is sometimes evident. You can't, she argues, fully understand Chicago's campuses unless you understand, for example, how Chicago's universities developed the very concept and practice of urban ecology. Haar is not just writing about campuses, but about the whole way that universities engage the city. She writes, "Higher education is not in the United States, commonly understood as an urban spatial practice." She aims to change that understanding, through her own approach to theory and fieldwork, and it is not a task for the meek of purpose.

Neither is building a new urban campus. Most city administrations actively support university expansion, seeing it as critical to their municipality's prestige and competitiveness. Neighbors, however, often protest, finding little common purpose with the institution in their midst in terms of scale and activities, programmatic differences detailed by Jane Jacobs with a vision still potent 50 years after it was articulated. Campuses are also, in some communities, challenging due to a fundamental socioeconomic asymmetry. University education is vastly more democratic than before, but it is not universal.

There are opportunities for a common mission, however, and Haar's volume contributes mightily to our knowledge of what has been and might be. She ends the book with a chapter on the implications of the largely still unbuilt proposals by Harvard, Columbia, and NYU. While she holds off on directly critiquing those proposals (quoting adamant critics such as Columbia's Mark C. Taylor instead), she proposes unequivocally that

"this is the moment to reconceive the campus not as a discrete community set apart from others but as an urbanity capable of engaging both new forms of cities and city living brought about in physical and virtual space." But, she avers, this is a case for what should be, not necessarily what will be. In looking at urban campuses in the United States and abroad, it is clear that universities, and the administration, staff, faculty, and student body that occupy them, are still powerfully drawn to the symbolism of the enclave, and to the formation of the "discrete community" that goes with it. It is time for further research, and no doubt Haar is already on it. For the future of the campus, knowledge is a two-way street. Don't expect it to be an easy drive.

RAY GASTIL IS THE CHAIR IN DESIGN INNOVATION AT PENN STATE'S STUCKEMAN SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE.



COURTESY UNIVERSITY CHICAGO PRESS



the real estate practice of displaying model homes that are not meant to function as normal houses. Of the missing driveway to a home in Scottsdale, Arizona, rendered as a garage door fronted by a graveled garden with a tree, some shrubs, and a cactus, Griffiths observes: "It suggests a dystopian vision of the resurgent desert landscape invading suburbia after the cars have gone—a seemingly normal suburban house turned, with Piranesian caprice, into a deteriorated edifice of suburban perfection."

Indeed, the allusions and illusions are par for the course. Griffiths' *Guide* is all about how to recognize the

subtle signs of its extraordinary success. In the same breath, however, Griffiths also takes pains to demonstrate its evident failures. He observes the condition of a single suburban house surrounded by stalled or as of yet unbuilt plots, creating at least in the moment, a suspended state of anticipation. "Unwittingly, these vacant lots evoke the paradigmatic picturesque scenario of the Palladian villa set within the landscape—a strange connection, considering that suburbia's chief inspiration is here evoked by the failure of the suburban project."

For Griffiths these visions of expanse and abandonment recall even more chilling pre-



monitions: "Standing among the incomplete developments on the edge of Phoenix, Arizona, we found ourselves in an endless landscape of unobstructed terrain entirely compliant and serviced for consumption. Strangely, the imagery of Superstudio's *Fundamental Acts* appeared entirely in accordance with the interests of suburban developers—an über-rationalized setting for an ever more efficient production of romanticism. Despite its best intentions, Superstudio appears to have unwittingly master planned the desert suburb."

Yet if this is a tried-and-true form of romanticism, it comes with heaps of irony, like the camouflaging of the common

outdoor electric power socket. Here the two images supplied by Griffiths evoke nothing less than unrestrained astonishment: in the one, we see a brick wall with a surface-mounted electric socket rendered almost invisible, covered in matching brick pattern, while in the second, a stucco wall surface hides a rather badly disguised socket under wrinkled matching-color paper. There is no question that Superstudio understood the infinite potential of infrastructural networks spreading across the globe's surface, and it is true that whether virtually or physically, we are now part of its inevitable realization, but who could have foretold the



manner in which the very circuitry of this megastructure would itself become so unremarkably banal?

Nothing, however, can detract from Griffiths amazingly frank indexing of the American suburban phenomenon. A lot is still left to the imagination. By that I mean the travelogue nature of the journey that made possible the book's content. The whole enterprise seems entirely heroic and highly romantic, as this couple from England reenact with seemingly great aplomb the classic road trip of a destinationless drive up and down the North American continent. Surely there must be more to the story than Griffiths is letting on, especially

Left to right: Typical mixed metaphor balustrades; spec lots with shed; a black glass security booth.

since the journey itself would have meant scores of encounters with the very Kerouacian characters that make these kind of drives both wonderfully joyful and nervously edgy. Until that version of the road trip comes out, we should content ourselves with the found landscapes that make up Griffiths' suburban "picturesque."

ARCHITECT AND HISTORIAN PETER LANG IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS.

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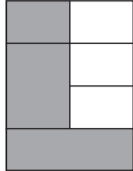
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US patent 11/603,724

TENGUERIAN ARCHITECTURAL MODELS

The model was built during design development and is now on permanent display at Yankee Stadium Museum.

PHOTO: ROY WRIGHT

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The 1959 ASM Headquarters in Ohio includes an extraordinary double-dome by Buckminster Fuller. Recently renovated by The Chesler Group, the project has been photographed by Jeff Goldberg.
Photo © Jeff Goldberg/Esto

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☐ 100-249
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MAY 23, 2012

Left to right: Robin Pogrebin, Rob Lippincott, Steve Cuozzo, Matt Chaban, and Julie Iovine.



On May 3, the second of a four part series on architecture and the media organized by *AN*, *Oculus* and AIAANY's Marketing and PR Committee, focused on media channels outside the design and building industry.

Held at the Center for Architecture and moderated by **Julie Iovine**, the panel included Robin Pogrebin, culture reporter at *The New York Times*, Steve Cuozzo, real estate reporter and restaurant critic at *The New York Post*, Matt Chaban, real estate editor and reporter at *The New York Observer*, and Rob Lippincott, senior vice president, education, at PBS. Here are some edited and excerpted highlights from the conversation, starting with each of the three print reporters describing their beats:

Robin Pogrebin: I am a reporter on the Culture Desk at the *Times* where there are actually not that many reporters. A few years ago, when Nicolai [Ourossoff] started as architecture critic, it was decided that there was a need to cover architecture as a story as opposed to as criticism. There had not been a dedicated reporter prior to that so that's what I became and I have been doing it ever since. I still cover cultural and performing arts issues, the NEA budget, preservation, and a lot of these things intersect but architecture is the main thing.

Steve Cuozzo: As a genetic New Yorker who loves the city with an intense passion, I have since 1999 been covering commercial real estate. It's only since after 9/11, that I have also been writing on design-related and architecture issues. I am a real-estate reporter only part-time; and architecture is just a sub-set of that.

I have no training, no background, and I don't even have the proper vocabulary. Still, I believe I can really contribute to the dialog because architecture is this strange art form that's the most invested in people's daily lives while it also comes across as the

most elitist of the art forms.

I say that, in part, because architecture critics don't write that much. Imagine if restaurant critics, dance critics, theater critics wrote as infrequently as most architecture critics do. Just look up their by-line counts! I feel that the public is entitled to more of a voice in the realm of architecture and design and urban issues than they are getting from people who really know more about it than I do.

Matt Chaban: I am also a genetic New Yorker, although I happen to have been born in Pittsburgh. I write on real estate for the paper and edit a daily blog aimed at real estate professionals and aficionados. I see my job as explaining how the city works. And as much as I like covering the big new buildings, it's really the nitty-gritty of how and why projects drag out that is the most interesting to me.

How much interest in, and knowledge of, architecture do you assume there is among your readers?

RP: Since Bilbao and the so-called starchitect phenomenon, there has really been a heightened interest in architecture. That changed coverage in that the general audience now knows names like Rem Koolhaas. Lately, I have found with the downturn that as major projects have fallen off there has definitely been diminished coverage from my standpoint. When I first took the beat, I could go anywhere, cover anything and that was my mandate. Given the finances of the *Times*, now it only makes sense that the critic go to some places. There also seem to be fewer grand projects to write about now and so the question becomes, what else rises to the level of really needing to be covered?

I get pitched in 100 to 200 emails a day; and I feel terrible about what might be falling through the cracks. I know the bar

has become somewhat higher in terms of what we write about. Why should we write about this one? That is a hard question to answer. Ideally, it is a story that has larger implications beyond just the project itself: something about it represents a trend; or there's a controversy about it (for better or worse); or a window into architecture through another route, say, the controversy about naming of Miami Art Museum.

At what point do you write about a project, and how many times can you return to it?

MC: Since we run a daily blog, it's as much as I want, and then there's the weekly paper, too. The upside of the blog is that those stories can be either long or short, whatever the story needs. It's a judgment call. But the basic line is that the more you write about something, the more you start hearing about it. So for me I cover things as often as I can: right now I write as often as possible on New York University because I think it's a serious development.

RP: Traditionally we might write about something when a design came out. Increasingly, it became clear that some of these projects were pie in the sky and might never be realized. Writing about fantasies seemed a kind of disservice to the reader. It made more sense to wait for the actual bricks and mortar to happen: then the critic can review it and we can talk to the experience of the building. So now, we've been doing more at the tale end than at the beginning.

SC: The important issue is what and when does a project rise to the importance for a broader audience. Frankly, I don't understand the way the architectural critical establishment works. Theater critics, film critics, book critics review everything; I don't understand why architecture is placed on such an exalted plane of discourse and appreciation that does not obtain in any of

the other art forms. To illustrate, the 9/11 memorial opened in September, it's now May and unless I missed it, the *New York Times* architecture critic has yet to weigh in. Never mind that the museum is incomplete, we all know that; the fact is the *Times* wrote for ten years about the importance of the 9/11 museum and the urgency of the memorial and all the design issues. Now that it has finally opened to the world, they seem to have gone silent. I don't get it.

RP: At the *Times*, critics are in a separate world from the reporters. In this case, Steve, I happen to agree and I have raised the question. I thought maybe it happened while we were in the process of changing critics and it had fallen through the cracks. I think Michael Kimmelman has a very different approach to criticism than we have ever had. He's not, so far, reviewing individual projects as we have in the past. He doesn't really have an architectural background. We may see some frustration: Not only are we not up to reviewing every thing, we may not review what might be expected of individual projects.

Are you pressured to cover subjects, or projects?

MC: I have been told to be less wonky. I have been told to stop invoking Robert Moses. We write almost not at all about architecture except in terms of development; we do a lot of residential real estate and industry types fighting each other. I have been asked to profile architects—for example Tod Williams and Billie Tsien because of the Barnes Museum opening—but that goes in the culture section. It's not considered hard news.

SC: I have numerous editors breathing down my neck about many things but never about architecture and design. I have this truly strange role at the paper that I wish I could share with architecture enthusiasts who are more learned than I am. I can just tell my editors at business or the editorial section that I really have to write this piece, and I have extraordinary freedom to do that. There's a lot more pressure when it's about breaking news concerning commercial real estate and that has become an extremely competitive environment only in the last four years.

RP: Opinions are really not my turf. The conventional wisdom now is that there is no such thing as subjectivity if there ever was. And there is certainly more attitude and voice in what you see online, but at the *Times*, it is the critic's job to weigh in with

opinions, not mine.

What's your take on starchitecture? Does it make reporting easier?

RP: I have started to want to move away from the usual suspects. We will always write about these guys with the names but it's nice to expand the circle. That said, it's not as easy to get at those other stories.

Rob Lippincott: I think we can chock up some of the interest in starchitects to Charlie Rose; he had them all on his show and he really help demystify what current architecture is all about.

SC: On balance, the starchitect phenomenon was a good thing. It drew attention to a subject that too many people did not think about on a regular basis, in the same way that star chefs brought attention to food or the way the American Ballet theater and dancers like Baryshnikov in the 1970s made classical dance popular in a way that had never been done before.

On the other hand, you have something like the Gehry building on Spruce Street that is dammed marvelous. I wonder about all the people who look at it every-day and think, That's terrific, and if they really even know it's by Frank Gehry or if they know anything at all about Bilbao. I really don't know.

What needs to be written about right now?

SC: There's a lot of residential building going on and I could be missing the boat here, but there really isn't that much going on in terms of design issues to be discussed and debated. Yes, there are these huge projects like Hudson Yards and Hudson West and Ratner's site behind the arena where there may, or may not, be some new buildings. But I am not aware that any of these projects are even remotely close to happening in terms of actual development. There are holes in the ground everywhere, but there's nothing to engage the public's attention the way the Trade Center did or even Columbus Circle did when it went through its many permutations before it finally got built after ten years. There's nothing like that right now.

RP: One of the things interesting me right now is the degree to which developers have decided whether name architects were worth the investment in bringing added value. We haven't checked back, post-recession, to see whether developers feel like those architects were worth the extra cost and the headache.

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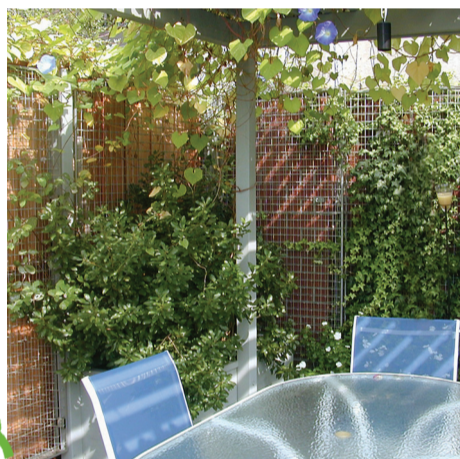


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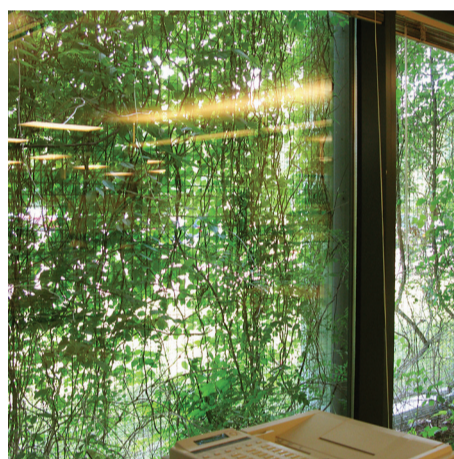


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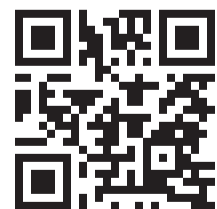
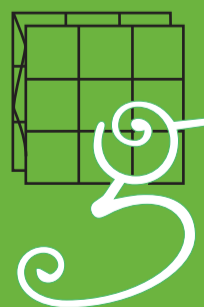
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